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PUBLICATIONS

News Notes

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WE BEG TO REPORT

When we asked Mrs. Cowing, of the Federal office Readability Unit to look over Massachusetts' new annual Extension report, she "Fleschtimated" the text as "fairly difficult" reading; but she enthusiastically proclaimed the report as a whole "excellent" and "one of the best." We kinda agreed, and so we asked for copies to send you. Yours is enclosed.

Leafing through the report, we're taken in by the color and general appearance of the cover. The over-all lay-out is simple and attractive and the color appealing. These features helped allay our allergy to photo paste-ups, odd shapes, and lack of separation between pictures. Cutting corners is often a good idea, but we wonder if it should apply to pictures. We lay down the dogma that as far as cover pictures are concerned, two's a crowd.

Wise use is made of page 2 to highlight important facts about the year's work. Director Munson's friendly, informal message on page 3 is one of the best we've seen. It certainly should help to get the reader into the report. Plenty of white space on this page does away with any suggestion of overcrowding and helps to focus attention on the director's message. Probably the block of type should be moved slightly to the left. The picture and caption don't tie in with the rest of the page. We wish some of the pictures lined up or blocked up better, say the three at the top of the page 8-9 spread, for example.

Other features we like about the report are the good, large size of type and the ample leading in relation to column width. Sans Serif type to go with the headings might be preferable to italics for the outlines. Italics are hard to read if used for more than a few words or lines, though their good size here helps to compensate for this. Another asset is the excellent reproduction of halftones on the suitable coated paper.

We're partial also, to the byline on the inside of the back cover lifting anonymity from the one who did the job. Sometimes we think that Extension overdoes the principle of "Extension Editors Anonymous." Congratulations, Radie Burn, on a very creditable report. Only, next year, Mrs. Cowing wants to know, couldn't you please bring the text down a grade or two below its present high school level (norm for printed extension annual reports).

We'll pass on to you a question raised by one of our colleagues: Has brevity been carried too far in this report? Is there enough meat in it?

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ATOMIC AGE IN TYPESETTING

Perpetual motion may still be a dream, but phototypesetting has become a reality. At the 1947 exhibit of "Books by Offset Lithography" at the New York Public Library in May there was distributed a 32-page catalog for which all the type had been set photographically--without the use of any metal type. The catalog was printed by offset. The type was set on a machine made by the Intertype Corporation.

UP WITH WHICH WE WILL NOT PUT

"I'll try to write simply, but a preposition is one thing I'll never end a sentence with," Louis Franke tells Texas county extension agents in an issue of his weekly information news letters.

Writing for easy reading was also discussed by Louis in another issue of the news letter, in which he said, "Fellow named Mark Adams, who specializes in making little words out of big ones, comes over from Austin once in a while to help us untangle our publications. Kind of a consultant.

"Well, one day I checked Dr. Rudolf Flesch's book, The Art of Plain Talk, out of the Extension library and gave it to Mark to read. . . ."

The next morning Mark gave it back to Louis with a note and a copy of the "book" he had written in the meantime. It's entitled, "How To Write So People Will Know What You're Trying To Say." Through the courtesy of Louis Franke we are enclosing a copy for your enlightenment.

"What Mark did, of course, was to point out that most of us find it easier to talk than to write; we always get to worrying about our grammar when we start putting words down on paper," Louis explains. "So, his idea is that if grammar is a mental hazard, forget it, write by ear."

For further discussion of Mark Adams' "book," see page 1 of USDA for July 7.

PLASTIC DUPLICATING PLATES

We've just been looking over samples of the new direct-image and photographic plastic plates for use on office lithograph duplicators (mentioned in our July 15 issue). Also we've been reading the manufacturer's leaflet telling about them, and noticed that they will be demonstrated on request.

TAKING STOCK

Do you ever suddenly find that a bulletin is out of print just at a time when demand for it is at a high pitch? And maybe it will take a month or two to get more copies printed?

Glen Rutledge, Arkansas extension editor, tells us what he and his coworkers are doing to keep from being red-faced over publications supplies.

Says Glenn, "We have always had trouble, like other States, I imagine, in keeping enough current publications available to meet all our demands. For instance, we find some 4-H Club bulletins are exhausted in the middle of the club year and sometimes there are no garden circulars ready when spring comes around. In an effort to relieve, if not entirely eliminate, this condition, we are making a monthly report to each specialist showing the exact status of the publications for which he is responsible. An estimate of how long the supply will last is also included.

"We believe this plan will call to the specialist's attention, month after month, how low his supply is getting. This, we think, will cause him to revise, rewrite, or give us authority to reprint circulars before the supply is completely gone."

Each specialist gets a filled-in form listing the bulletins for which he is responsible and giving the supply information for each publication. The form says, "The Extension Specialist is to advise with Extension Editor regarding a reprint or revision where stock is reported low, keeping in mind that it may take 60 or 90 days to get a new publication or revision cleared, printed, and delivered."

ANOTHER NEW ENGLAND 4-H BULLETIN

We've just been looking over New England's latest effort in interstate extension printing, 4-H Dairy Club Handbook. Radie Bunn, Massachusetts extension editor, who saw the bulletin through the mill, explains that "We deliberately started out to make this a complete textbook with the idea of carrying the club member on from the time he first got his calf until his animal was full grown."

The bulletin was developed by a committee consisting of H. A. Leland, Massachusetts assistant State club leader, chairman; E. H. Loveland, Vermont extension dairyman; and D. C. Gaylord, Connecticut extension animal husbandman. The copy we've been looking over was part of the Massachusetts supply and was published as Massachusetts 4-H Leaflet No. 14.

Because of the paper shortage, a newsprint type of paper had to be used, and Radie comments that "Anything you might say cannot make us feel any worse about it. Shortage of paper, printer's help, and the size of the job itself (56 pages) all worked against this particular leaflet. It was about 2 months after second proofs were returned before the job was even put on the press."

NORTH CENTRAL COOPERATIVE RESEARCH BULLETIN

We have just been looking at a cooperative North Central States Experiment Station publication: Wisconsin Station Bulletin 470, Dairy Cattle Housing in the North Central States. The agricultural experiment stations of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and the USDA Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering cooperated in issuing it.

